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FM THE SITUATION ROOM TOHAK 169

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TO AMEMBASSY GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L EYES ONLY WH37739

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SECTION ONE OF TWO

DELIVER OPENING OF BUSINESS  
TO LARRY EAGLEBURGER FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

DECEMBER 20, 1973

TO: HENRY A. KISSINGER  
FROM: BRENT SCOWCROFT

MORI C03343548

SENATOR FULBRIGHT THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING  
REPORT BY SETH TILLMAN, ONE OF THE COMMITTEE'S STAFF MEN AT PRESENT  
IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

BEGIN TEXT.

BEIRUT - DECEMBER 10, 1973

THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF A EUROPEAN JOURNALIST A MEETING WAS  
ARRANGED FOR ME LAST NIGHT WITH A TOP PALESTINIAN LEADER ( MR. SALAH  
KHALAF ("ABU IYAD"), WHO IS THE NO. 2 MAN AFTER YARAFAT IN PATAH,  
AND A MAJOR SOURCE OF INTELLECTUAL AND OPERATIONAL FORCE FOR THE  
PLO. HE IS ALSO REPORTED TO BE THE TOP EXECUTIVE FOR "BLACK SEPTEMBER"  
OPERATIONS.) THE EUROPEAN JOURNALIST DELIVERED ME TO A  
RENDEVOUZ POINT ON A MAJOR THOROUGHFARE, WHERE HE LEFT ME AND I  
TRANSFERRED TO THE CAR WITH TWO PLO MEN. THEY WERE CORDIAL AND RELAXED  
AS WE DROVE THROUGH A MAZE OF BACK STREETS AND FINALLY CAME TO  
AN APARTMENT BUILDING WHERE THE PALESTINIAN LEADER AWAITED US IN THE  
APARTMENT OF A PALESTINIAN FAMILY. IT WAS MADE CLEAR TO ME THAT THIS  
WAS NOT HIS OWN APARTMENT BUT RATHER ONE WHICH HE WAS ONLY VISITING  
BRIEFLY.

(HE TAKES VERY ELABORATE PRECAUTIONS AND MOVES AROUND A GREAT  
DEAL--NOT SO MUCH FOR FEAR OF THE ISRAELIS OR THE LEBANESE POLICE,  
I WAS TOLD, BUT FOR FEAR OF THE AGENTS OF KING HUSSEIN. THESE  
AGENTS, WHO ARE REPORTED TO BE  
NUMEROUS IN BEIRUT, ARE SAID TO BE BENT UPON RETALIATION FOR THE

\*\*\*\*\*WHSR COMMENT\*\*\*\*\*

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KILLING IN CAIRO OF KING HUSSEIN'S PRIME MINISTER WASFI TEEL.) THE DISCUSSION PROCEEDED IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF CORDIALITY AND EVEN GOOD HUMOR. THE PALESTINIAN LEADER, WHO SPEAKS LITTLE ENGLISH BUT UNDERSTANDS SOME, WAS ASSISTED BY ONE OF THE YOUNG MEN WHO HAD PICKED ME UP IN THE CAR; THE YOUNG MAN ACTED AS INTERPRETER. THE PALESTINIAN LEADER EXPOSITED THE PALESTINIAN CASE WITH LOGIC AND CLARITY, IN A MANNER REMINISCENT OF ONE OF ONE'S BETTER PROFESSORS IN GRADUATE SCHOOL.

HE SPOKE FIRST OF THE DEEP ANGER OF THE PALESTINIANS TOWARD THE US, EMPHASIZING, HOWEVER, THAT THIS RESENTMENT WAS DIRECTED NOT TOWARD THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, GOVERNMENT, OR POLITICAL SYSTEM BUT SOLELY TOWARD AMERICAN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, HE THOUGHT, WAS UNACCOUNTABLY IGNORANT OF AND INSENSITIVE TOWARD THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. HE HELD PRESIDENT NIXON INDIRECTLY IF NOT DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE "MASSACRE" OF THE FEDAYEEN BY KING HUSSEIN'S ARMY IN SEPTEMBER 1970. HE THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE, THOUGH NOT CERTAIN, THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD INSPIRED THAT OCCURRENCE. IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE, IN THE VIEW OF THIS PALESTINIAN LEADER, THAT THE ISRAELIS AND THE JORDANIANS WOULD HAVE WISHED TO CRUSH THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT. IT WAS NOT UNDERSTANDABLE TO HIM, FROM THE STANDPOINT OF EITHER MORALITY OR AMERICAN SELF INTEREST, THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD HAVE WISHED TO DO SO. THE JORDANIANS, HE STRESSED, GREATLY FEAR THE PALESTINIANS, AS INDEED DO ALL THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS.

THE PALESTINIAN LEADER WENT ON TO ASSERT THAT THE PALESTINIANS, LIKE ARABS IN GENERAL, ARE NOT ATTRACTED TO THE SOVIET UNION OR TO COMMUNISM AS AN IDEOLOGY THEY MUST, HOWEVER, TAKE THEIR FRIENDS WHERE THEY FIND THEM, AND THE SOVIET UNION HAS IN MANY INSTANCES ACTED AS A FRIEND WHEREAS THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN UNACCOUNTABLY HOSTILE. RESENTFUL AS THEY ARE TOWARD US-- AND THEY ARE VERY RESENTFUL INDEED, HE STRESSED--THE PALESTINIANS RETAINED MORE FOR A DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES.

HE CONTINUED WITH REFLECTIONS ON AMERICAN POLICY IN GENERAL AND THE ATTITUDE OF DR. KISSINGER IN PARTICULAR. HE NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD SUGGESTED THAT ISRAEL AND JORDAN MUST REACH A "COMPROMISE", BUT IN SPEAKING OF THIS COMPROMISE, HE SAID THE SECRETARY HAD MADE NO MENTION OF THE PALESTINIANS. THIS CAUSED HIM TO SUSPECT THE UNITED STATES MIGHT CONTEMPLATE THE USE OF THE PALESTINIANS AS OBJECTS OF A COMPROMISE BY OTHERS. "WE ARE NOT GOING TO BE THE PRICE OF PEACE," HE SAID, WITH ALL POSSIBLE EMPHASIS.

DEVELOPING THIS THEME FURTHER, THE PALESTINIAN LEADER SAID THAT HE THOUGHT MR. KISSINGER WAS ACCUSTOMED TO DEALING IN TERMS OF THE BALANCE BETWEEN GREAT POWERS AND GREAT FORCES, AND THAT HE WAS LESS INTERESTED IN WHAT MIGHT SEEM TO AN AMERICAN ONLY A "SMALL" PEOPLE OR GEOGRAPHIC AREA. THE US, THE PALESTINIAN LEADER NOTED, HAD EXTRICATED ITSELF FROM VIETNAM, BUT NOTHING HAD BEEN RESOLVED AS FAR AS THE INDOCHINESE PEOPLE AND THEIR PROBLEMS WERE CONCERNED. HE FEARED THAT THE GREAT POWERS MIGHT BE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT

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THEY COULD DISPOSE OF THE PALESTINIANS IN A SIMILAR WAY. SHOULD THAT BE THE CASE, HE AVERRED--AGAIN WITH THE EMPHASIS--THE PALESTINIANS "WOULD NOT BE WITHOUT RESOURCES."

HE THEN SAID THAT HE WISHED TO DISCUSS "WHAT IS CALLED 'TERRORISM'", PARTICULARLY THE OCCURENCE IN KHARTOUM. HE SAID THAT THE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP HAD NOT KNOWN THAT "THOSE BOYS WHO CARRIED OUT THAT OPERATION" WOULD KILL AMERICAN AND BELGIAN DIPLOMATS --THAT WAS NOT THE INTENTION OF THE PALESTINIAN LEADERS, HE SAID.

HE PROCEEDED TO DISCUSS THE PURPOSE OF TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL TERMS. THEY WERE NOT CARRIED OUT, HE EMPHASIZED, FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR IMMEDIATE RESULTS, AND CERTAINLY NOT FOR PURPOSES OF TERROR OR REVENGE IN

END TEXT.

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THEMSELVES. THEIR PURPOSE WAS BROADLY POLITICAL, TO DRAW THE ATTENTION OF THE WORLD, AND MOST ESPECIALLY OF THE UNITED STATES, TO THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT AND TO ITS PURPOSES. HE WONDERED WHY, AFTER SUCH OCCURRENCES AS KHARTOUM, THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE DID NOT SEEM TO SEEK OUT THE UNDERLYING REASONS FOR SUCH ACTIONS. HE WAS UNDER NO ILLUSION. HE ADDED, THAT PEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES INSIDE ISRAEL WOULD BRING EARLY, SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS. THEIR INTENTION WAS TO KEEP THE STRUGGLE GOING, TO KEEP THE ISRAELIS ENGAGED.

HAVING COMPLETED THIS EXPOSITION OF WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS BACK GROUND MATTERS, THE PALESTINIAN LEADER WENT ON TO SPELL OUT THREE SPECIFIC POINTS AS TO WHICH ISRAEL WOULD BE EXPECTED TO GIVE WAY IN THE FORTHCOMING PEACE CONFERENCE:

FIRST, ISRAEL MUST RECOGNIZE THAT "THERE IS A PALESTINIAN PEOPLE WITH LAND AND INSTITUTIONS AND WITH TOTAL AUTHORITY ON THEIR OWN LAND."

SECOND, ISRAELI EXPANSION MUST STOP, THERE MUST BE AN END TO UNLIMITED JEWISH IMMIGRATION INTO PALESTINE; AND THE PALESTINIANS MUST BE PERMITTED TO RETURN TO THEIR LAND.

THIRD, ISRAEL MUST RECOGNIZE THAT IT CANNOT LIVE IN A HOSTILE AREA; THE SALVATION OF ISRAEL LAY IN THE OPENING UP OF A DIALOGUE WITH THE PALESTINIANS LOOKING TOWARD THE FORMATION OF A UNIFIED "DEMOCRATIC STATE."

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COMING THEN TO THE PROSPECT OF PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE PEACE CONFERENCE, HE SAID THAT THE PALESTINIAN POSITION WOULD BE FORMULATED FURTHER IF AND WHEN AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE WERE FORTHCOMING. THEY WOULD DECIDE WHETHER TO PARTICIPATE WHEN THE INVITATION CAME, AND THEY WOULD THEN SPELL OUT THEIR OVERALL POSITION IN FURTHER DETAIL. THE PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, HE EMPHASIZED, "BUY A TICKET" TO THE PEACE CONFERENCE. BY THAT HE SEEMED TO MEAN THAT THE PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT ABANDON THEIR BASIC PURPOSES, OR CURRY FAVOR WITH OTHERS, AS THE PRICE OF PARTICIPATION.

NOW, MORE THAN EVER, THE PALESTINIAN LEADER STRESSED, THE PLO'S POSITION WAS "BALANCED AND CONSERVATIVE." "WE ARE WILLING TO BRING PEACE," HE STRESSED.

RETURNING TO THE PLO'S VIEW OF THE UNITED STATES, HE SAID THAT HE WANTED US TO KNOW THAT EVEN THOUGH THE PALESTINIANS DEEPLY RESENTED AMERICAN POLICY, "WE DON'T HATE THE GUTS OF EVERY AMERICAN." INDEED, HE THOUGHT THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD LONG BEEN ACTING AGAINST ITS OWN INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE AMERICAN POLICY THEREBY SERVED THE INTERESTS OF COMMUNISM, AND THAT THIS TENDENCY WOULD CERTAINLY GROW IF WE ALL NOW FAILED TO BRING ABOUT AN EQUITABLE PEACE.

IN CONCLUSION, THE PALESTINIAN LEADER STRESSED AGAIN, HOWEVER INSIGNIFICANT THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE MIGHT SEEM IN BROAD GEOPOLITICAL TERMS, OR FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE GREAT POWERS, IT WAS NONETHELESS A MATTER OF SUPREME CONSEQUENCE TO THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED, AND THEY WERE NOT WITHOUT RESOURCES TO ADVANCE THEIR CAUSE. THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION, HE SAID, IS NOT MERELY ONE FOR THE THREE MILLION PALESTINIANS BUT RATHER ONE FOR ALL ARABS. THE MIDDLE EAST, HE STRESSED, CANNOT BE BROUGHT TO A LASTING SETTLEMENT BY COMPROMISE ON "SMALL ISSUES" AS WAS DONE IN VIETNAM. WE ARE NOT GOING TO BE THE "PRICE OF PEACE," HE SAID AGAIN.

HAVING COMPLETED HIS EXPOSITION, THE PALESTINIAN LEADER INVITED MY OBSERVATIONS ON AMERICAN ATTITUDES AND POLICY AND ON PROSPECTS FOR THE PEACE CONFERENCE. HE LISTENED ATTENTIVELY AND WITH EVIDENT INTEREST AS I SPELLED OUT MY THOUGHTS.

THE DISCUSSION LASTED ABOUT ONE AND ONE-HALF HOURS. I LEFT WITH THE TWO PALESTINIANS WHO HAD BROUGHT ME TO THE APARTMENT, AND THE ONE WHO HAD SERVED AS INTERPRETER SUGGESTED THAT WE GO SOMEWHERE FOR COFFEE. WE WENT TO A HOTEL COCKTAIL LOUNGE-- HE SELECTED AN UNCROWDED ONE--AND THE DISCUSSION CONTINUED FOR ANOTHER HOUR OR SO. WE DISCUSSED AMONG OTHER THINGS THE POSSIBILITY OF AN OPENING UP OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PLO. HE THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE MOST DESIRABLE, SAYING THAT HE

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HOPED VISITING AMERICAN OFFICIALS WOULD MAKE CONTACT WITH PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES AND NOT SOLELY WITH THE DIPLOMATS OF HOST GOVERNMENTS. HE EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST TOO IN THE POSSIBILITY OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES COMING TO THE UNITED STATES TO EXPLAIN THEIR CAUSE TO AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND OPINION MAKERS. THIS POSSIBILITY, HE SAID, WAS UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION.

ARTICULATE, INTENSE AND PALPABLY IDEALISTIC, THE PALESTINIAN LEADER'S ASSISTANT WAS EXCEEDINGLY PUZZLED BY WHAT HE CONSIDERED THE FAILURE OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT TO MAKE A DISPASSIONATE, "SCIENTIFIC" STUDY OF AMERICAN INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE LISTENED MOST ATTENTIVELY BUT WITH EVIDENT SKEPTICISM TO MY ATTEMPTED EXPLANATION OF THE COMPLEXITIES OF AMERICAN POLITICS.

NOT WISHING TO APPROACH TOO CLOSELY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, MY PALESTINIAN ESCORTS DROVE ME TO A PLACE SOME BLOCKS AWAY FROM THE EMBASSY, FROM WHICH POINT I WALKED HOME ALONG THE CORNICHE. THEY SAID THAT WE COULD MEET AGAIN IF I WISHED TO, BY CONTACTING

"THE SAME MAN"

END TEXT.

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